

5-10-01

The ValleyStar

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MAY 10, 2001

Cinco de Mayo observes history

■**SPEAKER:** Edward James Olmos gives a compelling speech to the crowd of students and faculty assembled for the commemoration of Cinco de Mayo.

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

The campus joined together last week on a small corner of Monarch Square to listen to Edward James Olmos speak during the Cinco De Mayo celebration on subjects ranging from becoming active in the community, importance of education, and multiculturalism.

"There is no white race," Olmos said. "There is no Latino race. There is no Asian race. There is only one race, that's the human race."

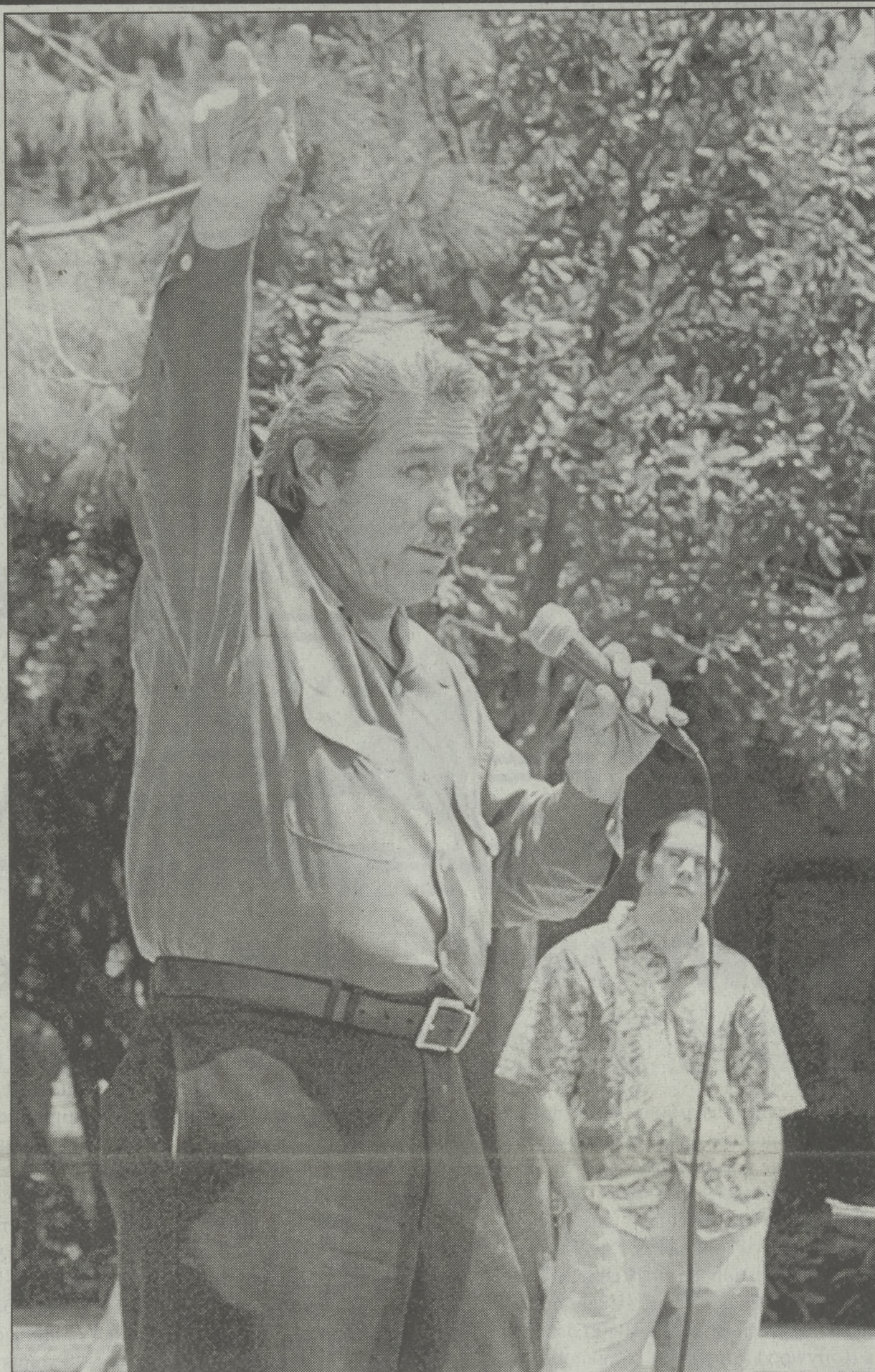
Music blared from the speakers and the smell of carne asada filled the air as students and faculty members came to enjoy the music and festivities commemorating "the battle de Puebla," the day the Mexican army, led by General Ignacio Zaragoza, defeated the French troops sent by Napoleon III on May 5, 1862.

This national holiday has grown over the years and has transcended the Mexican culture to symbolize a day of unity and hope.

Also out there celebrating Cinco De Mayo were C.L.U.E., MeCha, the A.S.U., and other clubs on campus.

"It's to get people involved and united in the school and the community," said Jesus Arribe vice president of MeCha. "To get some kind of community activity for the people." Well, the people came and Olmos was there to give them a show.

Less than 30 hours ago I was in federal prison," Olmos said. "I just got out of jail. I was in



Salvador Aguilar/Valley Star

Edward James Olmos recounts the ordeal he and others went through while protesting the bombing of Vieques by the armed forces of the United States last week during the Cinco de Mayo festivities.

Argentina marching for the 24th anniversary with the Grandmothers of the 'disappeared ones.' That was terrible time in Argentine history where 30,000 were killed by the army who forged a coupe."

Olmos was placed in prison

when he along with 200 other protestors non violently demonstrated against the bombardment of a small island off Puerto Rico. The island has been used for 60 years to practice their bombing techniques. The effects of all these years of bombing has

increased the rate of cancer for the some 9,500 inhabitants of the island.

"You can win this war without picking up one bullet or one stone," Olmos said.

Speech gabs way to medals

■**MEDALS:** Speech team medals in a national speech competition.

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

The Valley College speech team took gold and silver in the PHI RHO PI national speech competition held in Jacksonville Florida beating out other community colleges in the nation. Jeff Rechter took gold in the prose competition and Reana Irving took silver in informative speech.

Students on campus must won-

der, we have a speech team? Well, that's not too surprising since Valley didn't have a team until a week before the start of the fall semester.

Duane Smith got a phone call from Dr. Zahler head of the speech department asking if he would like to head the speech team. "You have a program, but you have no student," Smith said. "Get some students, get a team so we can justify the program and justify paying you."

Smith a former Valley College graduate in 92-93 won the national competition himself which led to a full scholarship to

SEE SPEECH, PAGE 4

Valley Star wins in Fresno

■**HONORS:** The Valley Star garners 9 awards in journalism conference.

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

The Valley Star staff was awarded nine awards from the Journalism Association of Community Colleges for sports feature, editorial cartoon, and photography.

This has been the best performance for the Valley Star in the JACC conference in recent memory. The conference is more than an awards show: it's an organization with more than 100 colleges from all over California and neighboring states working together in the development and advancement of journalism.

The competitions that students participate in are meant to mim-

ick real life working conditions of the professional journalist. There are also workshops and roundtables headed by professional journalists from leading newspapers such as the LA Times.

Rogelio Garcia won first place for editorial cartoon. Sotivear Sim won fourth place for sports feature. Samantha Kuppig and Salvador Aguilar both won honorable mentions for team feature and feature photo, respectively.

The conference which is held in Fresno every year, is an opportunity for the free exchange of ideas on the subject of journalism between students and professionals. This is the opportunity for the Valley Star to compare its paper to top journalism programs in California. It is a good measuring stick to find out what needs work and how far the paper has come since last fall.

Student liberates herself

■**REDEMPTION:** Life for one student changes drastically after a parent's death.

By LINDA TOPDJIAN
STAR REPORTER

Heavenly De Mello's life became anything but heavenly.

"I became very depressed because of my father's passing and lost control of my life, which led me to turn to crack cocaine that led to a path of self-destruction," De Mello said.

One month before her son David was born, De Mello's father died of complications from diabetes. The shock and effects of his loss took its toll on De Mello's marriage. She and her husband separated, and she went to live with her mother, but with her stepfather in the picture and the stress of being a new mother, De Mello fled into the

night.

The illness also took a toll on her parents' marriage. De Mello, who was very close to her father, she permanently moved in with her father when she was 15 years old. Her mother remarried.

De Mello's father shared in her daily life. They went everywhere together.

"My father was my close friend, teacher, counselor; we shared everything," she said. "He was my whole life. We shared my love of ice skating; he was so supportive in all aspects of the training in ice skating."

We went camping together in the Grand Canyon, fishing on my father's boat. My father even took the time to make me by hand a homemade scooter."

From age 16 to 18, De Mello participated in the job corps, staying nearby so she could be close to her father on weekends. She received a certificate for secretarial work. While she was in

the job corps, she met James Morrison. She had two children.

After her father died, she and Morrison separated. She

lost contact with her family and children for four years.

"I was sitting on a wall and could hear children laughing and playing, and I cried, remembering my own children that I couldn't see and touch because of the embarrassment of the hold drugs had on my life because I didn't want to leave the drugs yet

”

HEAVENLY DE MELLO

the hold drugs had on my life because I didn't want to leave the drugs yet, "she said.

Because of the drug abuse, De Mello found herself in trouble with the law. In August 1998, she was sentenced to serve a prison term in Chowchilla State Prison. She served 16 months and then was transferred Stockton State Prison to finish her time.

De Mello's aunt, Nancy Aniu, gave De Mello hope and encouragement, sending her care packages and inspiring her to become a moral Christian and to live a happy life. After her release, De Mello moved in with her mother and reunited with her children.

"I was prepared mentally to handle my parole regulations and stay clean from drugs and readjusting my life with my family and keep myself stable and live with moral values," De Mello said.

At age 27, she started school and worked as a warehouse attendant. After eight months,

SEE STUDENT, PAGE 4

InsideStar



Samantha Kuppig/Valley Star

page 2 Gas Prices

■How are you dealing with the rising cost of gasoline? Find out what other modes of transportation are available.

page 5 Memento

■Get the scoop on one weird movie.

EDITORIAL:**Civil Rights**

In one decision, the U.S. Supreme Court set back the civil rights clock 37 years.

On April 24, the Court held, in a 5-4 decision, that private parties can no longer sue federally funded agencies for instituting policies that discriminate against race, color or natural origin.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited such discrimination and gave individuals a legal remedy to fight it. Now, Justice Antonin Scalia, who delivered the opinion of the Court, has pushed the civil rights movement back into the dark ages.

"We therefore hold that no such right of action exists," he said, referring to the Court's decision to bar litigation against policies that discriminates.

Scalia said that Title VI only prohibits intentional discrimination.

Private parties can still sue federally funded agencies, such as states, schools and colleges that practice deliberate discrimination.

The difficulty with the Court's decision is simple: It leaves no legal remedy for private parties to fight subtle discrimination implemented through policies, intentional or not.

Taking away the right of individuals to affect a change in a policy that engenders discrimination paralyzes the Civil Rights Act of 1964, rendering it almost useless. This one action

by the court will give more ammunition to those already inclined to enact policies encouraging further discrimination.

Now it will be the obligation of individuals to prove not only that they were victims of discrimination but that it was intentional. Unless a school says, "Minorities and foreigners need not apply," how will intent be proven? Discrimination tends to cloak itself under the cover of darkness, scurrying away when exposed to the light.

Justice John Paul Stevens, who wrote the Court's dissenting opinion, said that the majority opinion of the Court was unfounded and hostile to "the right of private action long recognized under Title VI" of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

What did the Court have in mind when making this decision? Perhaps they wanted to lessen the burden these civil suits place on the court system. However, the court offered no viable alternative to fight discriminatory policies. Civil suits force policy makers to rethink antiquated beliefs. Without such motivation, there is no reason to change.

This action by the highest court in the land foreshadows gloomier events to come under a court that is certain to grow more conservative in the months and years ahead.

Voice of the People

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**VIEWPOINT: Video Violence**

By E. N. ZACARIAS
STAR REPORTER

Video games have long since made a dramatic metamorphosis from the simplistic to the more realistic—games such as "Pong" and "Pac-Man" are now replaced by more violent fare such as "Resident Evil" and "Half-Life."

The attraction is most certainly the graphic violence—which depending on the game—can be as realistic in detail as a Hollywood film. In the computer game "Soldier of Fortune," game play is designed so meticulously that a player can target an opponent's specific body part with a firearm and blow a limb off.

There might not be a direct correlation between video game violence and violent behavior in children, but there is definitely a degree of violent influence than can inspire a violent act. In the case of

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, the two Columbine shooters, both made references to a computer game called "Doom", a first-person shooter where the basic objective is simply to kill as many people and monsters that get in the player's way.

The psychological effects of these games are simple: violent games seem to give the message that killing is okay as long as the purpose is noble or justifiable: revenge and self-defense. This is a dangerous way of thinking, especially to those who have a distorted sense of reality.

The Entertainment Software Rating Board is an independent non-profit entertainment software rating organization established in 1994 for the sole purpose of advising buyers of questionable game content and rating them just like a movie rating. Games such as "All-Star

Baseball 2002" might receive an "E" rating for Everyone while more violent titles such as "Conker's Bad Fur Day" might receive an "M" rating for Mature.

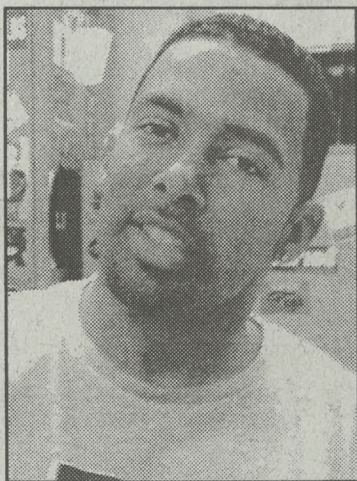
Used as the standard rating system, the board's ratings are required to be placed on the game's front packaging. However, stores that carry video games—with the exception of Toys R Us and Wal-Mart—still sell the mature rated games to kids younger than the intended rating age.

Parents should take an active interest in the games their children purchase or they should demand that video games be restricted to the intended target age group on the ESRB's ratings. Most importantly, though, they should talk to their children about the effects of violence both on and off the screen.

CampusView

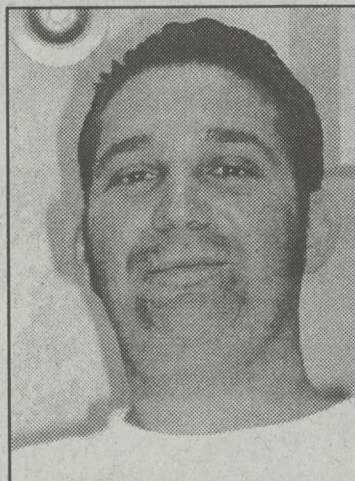
Compiled by Samantha Kuppig

How are the rising gas prices hurting you and do you use another means of transportation?



I think everyone should stop driving their cars to prove a point. Unfortunately I think public transportation prices are going to go up.

Earnest Collins
Broadcasting Major



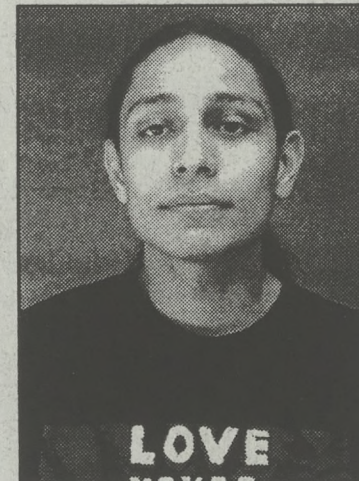
The public needs to demand more transportation. Los Angeles had the chance to be up there with New York and Seattle, but the oil companies stopped the progress in the 1930s. It's a sham.

Lazlo Kover, 36
Respiratory Therapy



The rising gas prices are driving me nuts because I can't afford my sanity saver trips.

Marcy Petrique, 23,
Photojournalism major



It's hurting me because I have to buy more gas and then I don't have enough money to do the things I want to do. My only other mode of transportation is my feet. My car is always on 'E'.

Tony Montes, 25, Music
Major

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Kati Prescott-Terray, soprano, and Neema Pazargad, pianist, performed on May 3 in the Music Recital Hall for the Campus Concert Series 2001.

Lisa Tobin/Valley Star

Otnemem: A memorable movie?

By ROGELIO GARCIA
STAR REPORTER

Leonard (Guy Pearce) lives in the present tense. Unable to create new memories after suffering a head injury, he's left with fading images of his life before that point in time, and scrambles to make sense of events as they happen to him, moment by moment. Because he can't keep an idea in his head for more than a couple of minutes, Leonard writes notes to himself everywhere — on scraps of paper, on the backs of the Polaroids he takes incessantly, and on his body as tattoos — in hopes that when he looks at them, he'll know what he was telling himself. Trouble is, he tends not to remember what all these notes mean.

The relationship between meaning and memory is a complex one that most of us take for granted — when you remember something, like a face or an event, you also have for it a context and a sense of how it connects to other faces and events in your past experience. But what if you didn't have that context? How would you know which face is relevant to you? Which event has consequences? Christopher Nolan's Memento

examines these questions and, in lieu of answers, poses still more questions.

Imagine that, like Leonard, you find yourself in mid-run, with a scary-looking guy with a gun running nearby, and you have to figure out who's chasing whom. In practical terms, it only takes a second to realize that he's chasing you, because he fires his gun at you and heads your way.

But that instant of not knowing is terrifying, unhooking, and not a little absurd. Memento offers versions of this instant again and again, situating you alongside Leonard, who can't ever know, for sure, what any given instant means for him. The film launches you repeatedly into Leonard's moment-to-moment existence by beginning again and again, as if it hasn't begun before. In this way, the movie, a post-nearly-neo-noir written and directed by Nolan and based on a short story by his brother Jonathan, emulates Leonard's own struggle to make sense of what's happening to and around him. To complicate matters further, and to make your experience even more like Leonard's, Memento works its narrative backwards. It opens with the last scene in the film, focused on a photo of a dead man whom Leonard

has just shot, and leads you step

by dicey step through the fragmented mess that has been his recent experience.

For starters, you learn a series of facts. Or maybe they're only facts according to Leonard. Fact one: he used to be an insurance investigator, a good one. Fact two: he was injured while trying to defend his wife, who was raped and murdered in their bathroom.

Fact three: now he wants revenge against the man (or men) who killed his wife and ruined his life, but he doesn't know who or where they are. Actually, he doesn't even know if they exist, or if his memory of the assault is accurate. And that is what makes him much like you.

Memento's genius lies in just such solicitations to recognize and sympathize with Leonard, to think that maybe his dire designs have a rationale. At once disturbing and titillating, Memento is quite unlike the usual filmic experience, leading you to the conclusion you've already seen the image of the bloody dead guy, whose name, you discover, is Teddy (Joe Pantoliano) — but never fully explaining each step along the way.

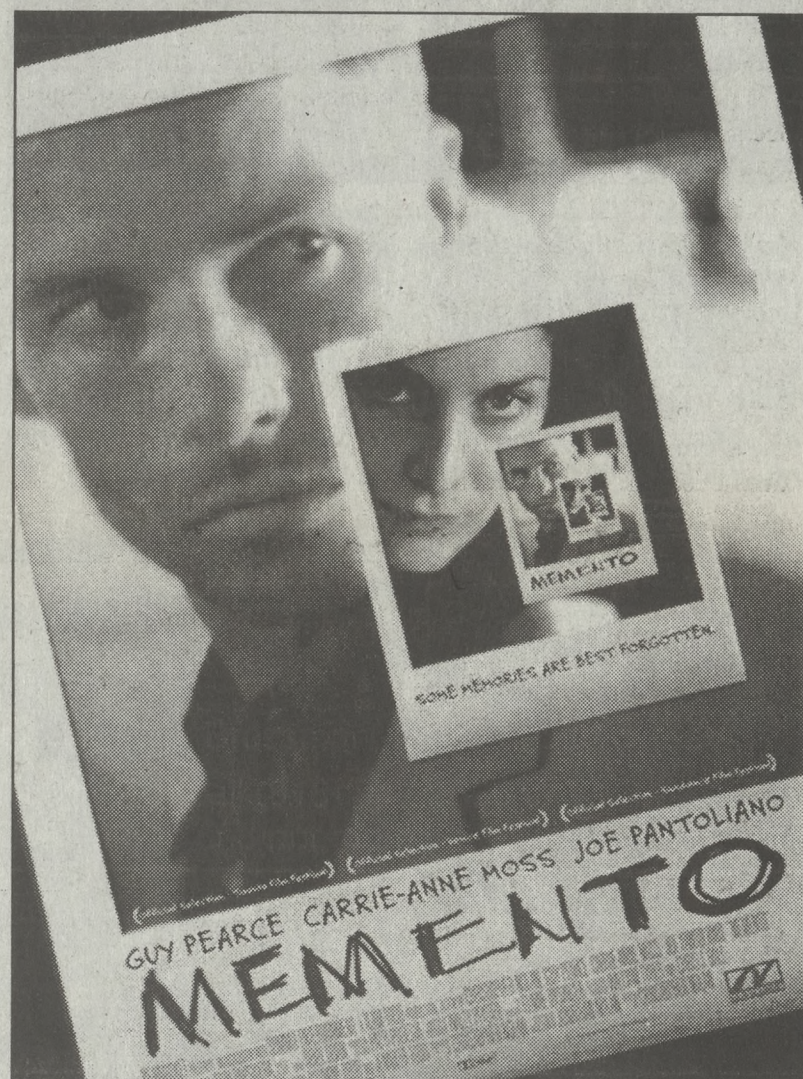
Slowly, you start to follow the bizarre logic that drives Leonard, but that doesn't make it any eas-

ier to like him or even to think he's got grounds for what he's doing. For a long while, you're struggling as much as Leonard does, to create a coherent narrative out of all the pieces you confront.

The more of these scraps of ideas you see, the more you're apt to doubt them, because they don't really fit together.

Memento isn't about character development or change. Leonard is incapable of either. Losing meaning is a frightening experience, because you're so used to thinking you have it, that your identity remains constant from moment to moment, that your memory is who you are.

If you have no memory, then who are you? Such questions may ultimately be more tedious than profound: you need to put on your pants and get out the door each day, whether or not you're sure of how one moment connects to the next. But the most important connection here is not between moments, between plot turns or characters. It's between you and Leonard. By the time he says, at film's end (or is it the beginning?), that he is "no different" from you, it's more than a little chilling to recognize even the bit of truth he's speaking.



In Memento Guy Pearce plays Leonard a man with no long term memory.

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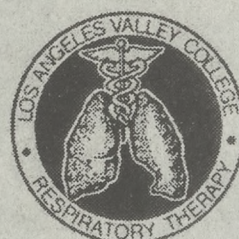
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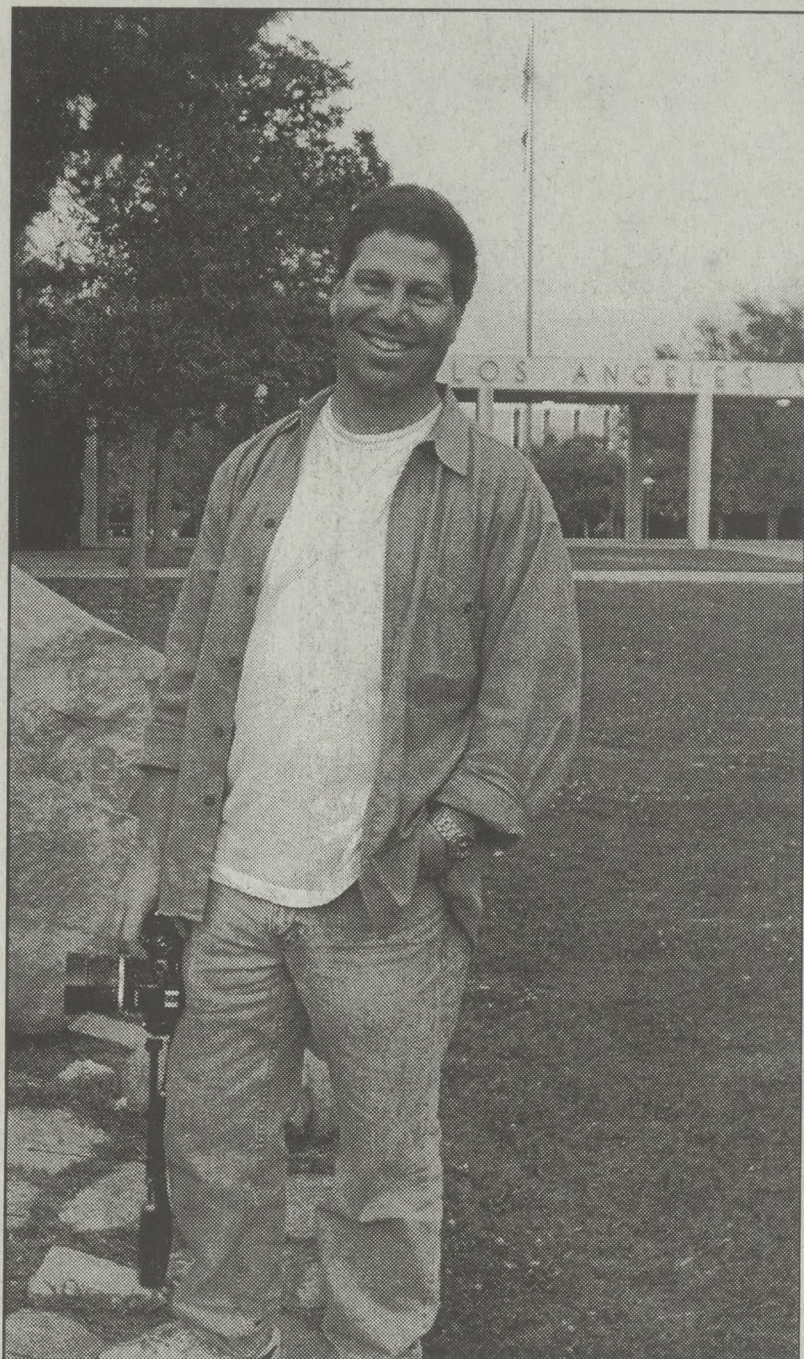


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Say Cheese!



Samantha Kuppig/Valley Star

Professional photojournalist and Valley College alumni, David Bohrer, takes one last stroll around the campus before embarking on his newest adventure. He has been appointed the personal photographer to Vice President Dick Cheney. With his new job, Bohrer will travel daily with Cheney, documenting the personal and professional life of one of the most visible political positions in the United States.

Speech

CONT'D FROM PAGE ONE

Northern Arizona, where he met his colleague and friend Jim Dobson.

So, Smith called Dobson who taught at Lancaster and Antelope Valley part time. "We have competed together," Smith said. "Now we are going to work together."

With only nine units each that are consumed by coaching the speech team Smith and Dobson were unable to tap into the talent pool at Valley. "As a result we don't have the opportunity to teach on campus," Smith said. "We have absolutely no interaction with the student. You have to have interaction and know the students to have them join with you."

They convinced 26 of their students to make the commute from the Antelope Valley to join the speech team. Most of the team commutes about an hour and a half to stay here until midnight practicing their speeches.

Some students are attracted to the speech team because of the promise of scholarship opportunities. "To find out that my two coaches got full rides, but were also national champions, any moment I could get to work with them I would jump on it," Josh Haley said. "I knew that's what I wanted with or without the scholarships."

Being a part of the speech team is not only tough on the students but on the advisers as well who

commute 500 miles a week between colleges.

"It's a great opportunity for the students to meet others and develop worthwhile relationships down the road," Dobson said. "It's almost like an underground fraternity of speech competitors"

Next year a full time position is opening which both Smith and Dobson are interviewing for, but not even a national championship makes it a sure thing.

"The reason I drove all that way was because of these two coaches," Haley said. "They gave me the drive to come down here to work with them."

"I'm going where my advisers are going," Irving said.

Student

CONT'D FROM PAGE ONE

she met her future fiancé, Vernon Brown, 31, who is studying to be a minister. De Mello worked hard at winning back her mother's trust and the trust of her two children, Vanessa, 9, and David, 7.

"Because of the wreckage of my past, I had to regain the love and trust of my family to make myself whole again and know I did the right thing as a Christian to live a moral life," she said.

Brown saw the struggle she was facing in the work force as a parolee, so he suggested she go

to college to get a career for a better paying job. She began attending Valley College and is studying to become a social worker. She plans to get her A.A. degree and go on to get a bachelor's degree in social sciences at Cal State Northridge.

"By attending Valley College, I am surrounded by my peers, as well as communicating with them; I can share my experiences," she said.

De Mello visits her children as often as she can and calls them every day to let them know she

loves them.

De Mello wants to be there for other young children. Through her experiences and as a social worker in the foster care program, she can make a difference in the lives of other children when they lose a parent and can help them readjust without turning to drugs or crime.

De Mello is living proof that through trials, conflicts and the sudden death of a parent, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Campus

CONGRATS

to the LAVC students who have earned Associate of Science Degrees in Respiratory Therapy.

-Charlotte Yap

Banzuela

-Liza Buencilla Jr.

-Arnel A. Flores

-David Fraser

-Crystal Ann Horrell

-Michelle Maguire-Raymundo

-Cynthia Marie

Martinez

-Casey C. Park

-Uvaldo Perez

-Tanya Lanell

Tyson

-Randall T. Wolfe

SCENE

Theater

Guys and Dolls

The drama department's production is playing in the Little Theatre running May 17, 18, 19 and the week of the 24, 25 and 26. For more info call (818) 947-2790.

Musical Events

LAVC Guitar Ensemble

will be performing on Friday, May 18 directed by Robert Mayeur

The LAVC

Philharmonic Choir will

perform on Tuesday, May 22

CSUN African Music

Ensemble directed by Ric

Alviso will perform on

Thursday, May 24.

For more info on any of these events call (818) 947-2347.

SPECIAL EVENTS

LAVC

Career/Transfer

Center Transfer Reception sign up by May 18 the event will be held on May 22 in Monarch Hall from 2:30-4:30 pm honoring students admitted to four-year colleges for Summer and Fall.

Student Art

Show in the Art

Department

in the Gallery the show is running from now until May 24, 2001 from 11am-2pm and in the evening from 7pm-9pm. For more information call (818) 947-2400.

ALERT STUDENTS!

The last day to drop classes with a "W" in person is May 11. May 12 is the last day to drop over the telephone.

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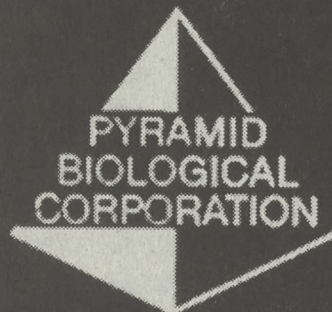
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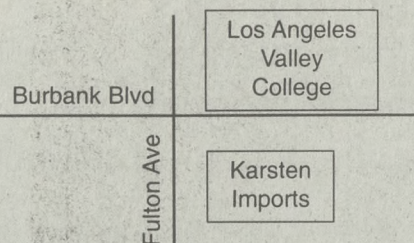
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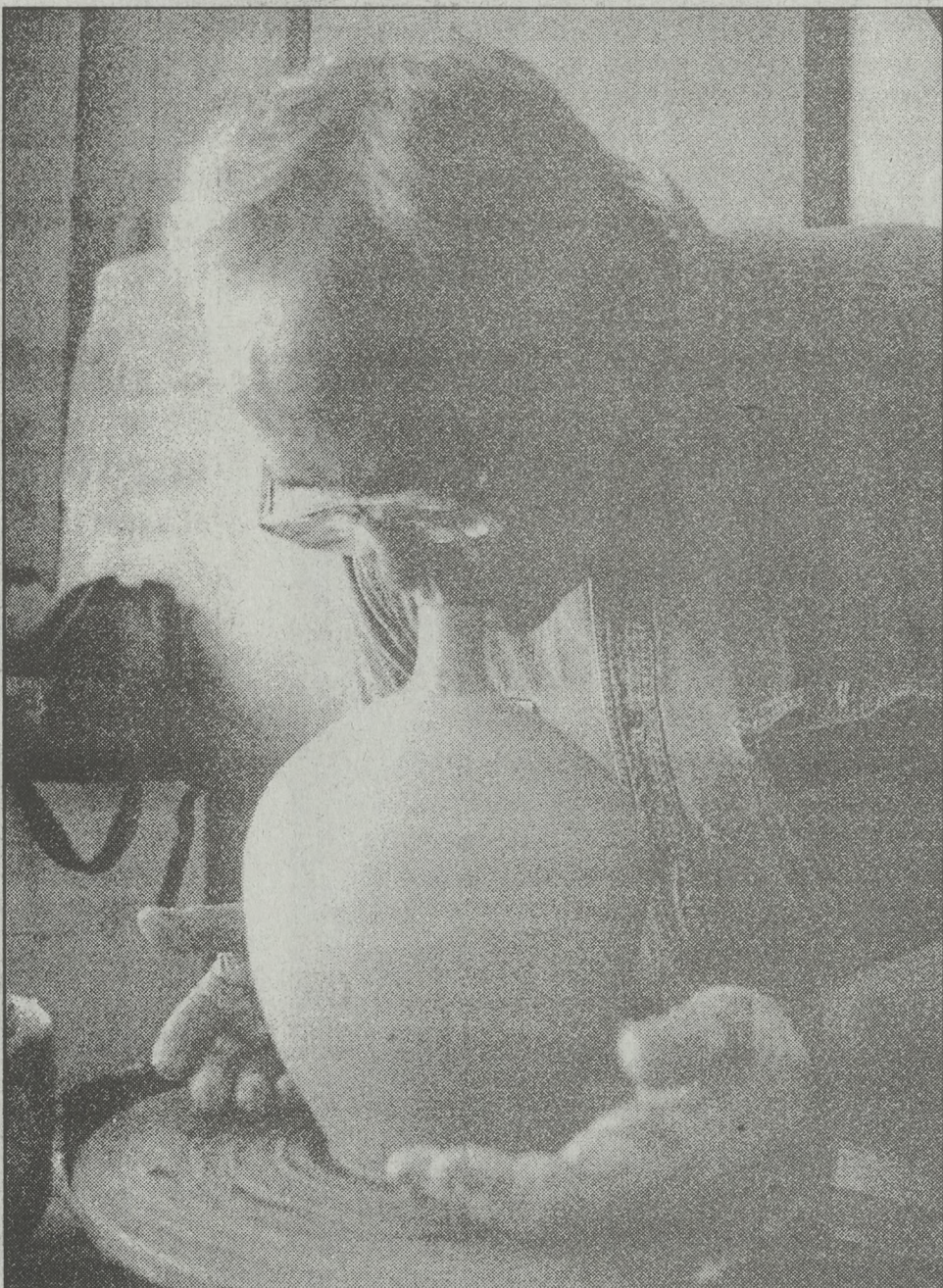
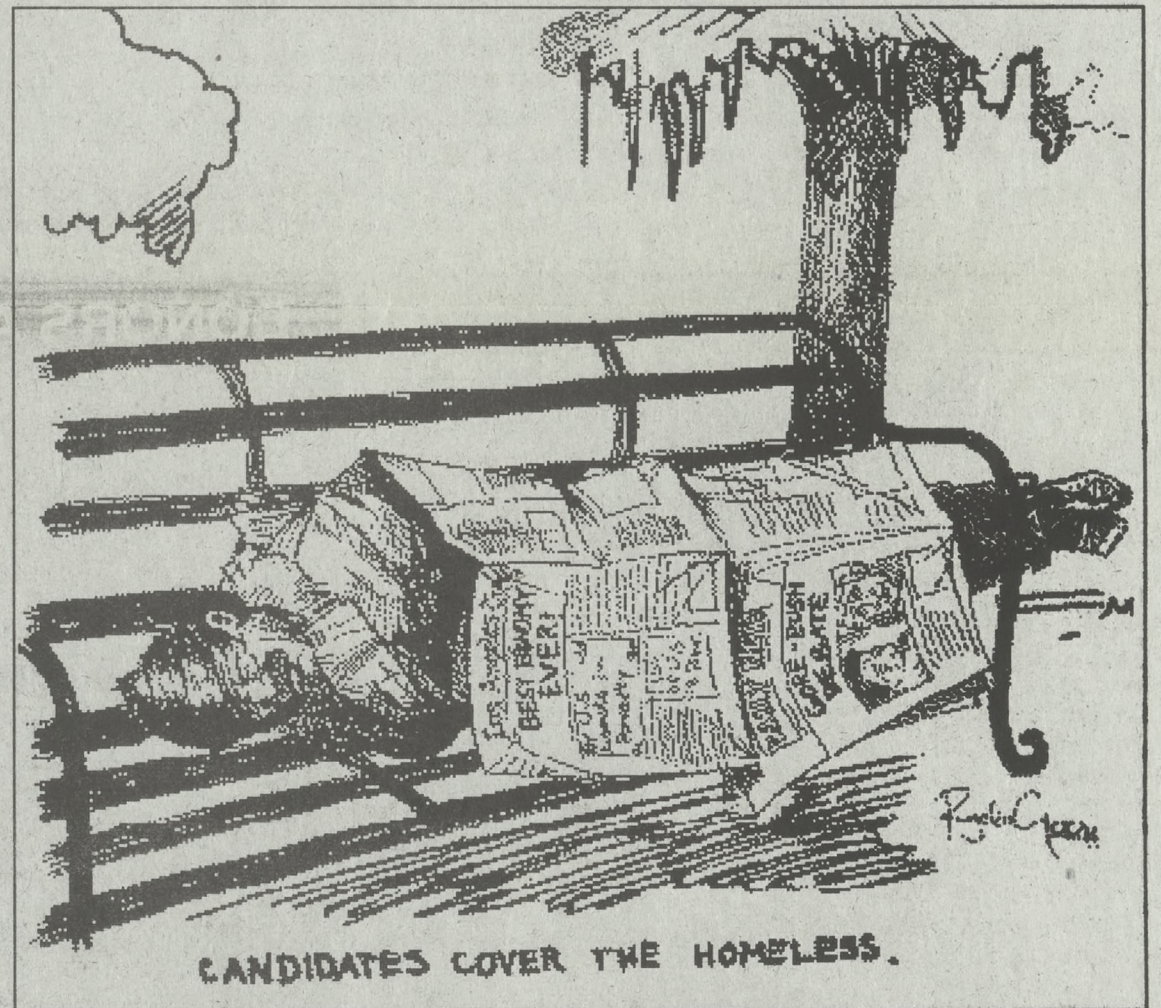
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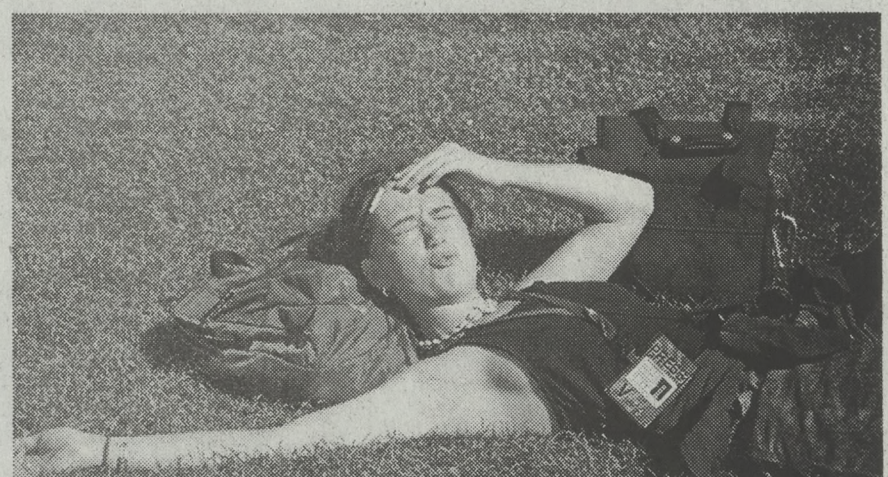
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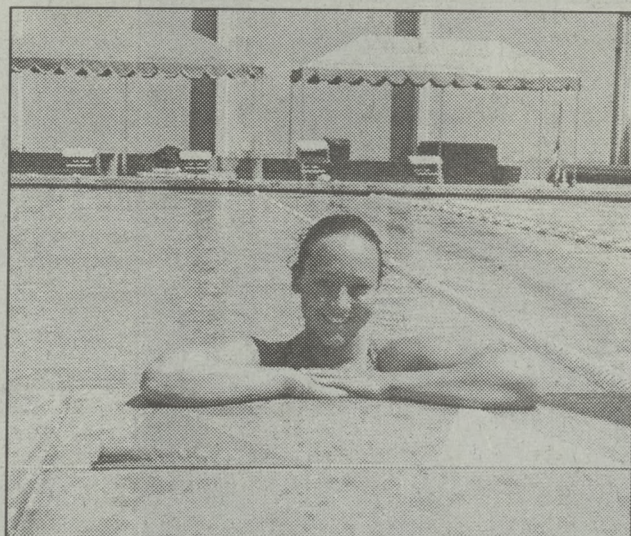
At the JACC conference in Fresno April 26-29 Valley Star photographers won the following awards:

Top HM bring in photo by Salvador Aguilar
Upper left 3rd place feature photo by Edith Franco
Above 1st place editorial cartoon by Rogelio Garcia
Left HM feature photo by Samantha Kuppig
Below HM feature photo by Salvador Aguilar



Athlete of April

Swimming



Nicolle Hildreth

Sophomore

Best free-style sprinter on the women's team
Has led the women team to a dual meet record of 6-3

Swimming



Carl Amato

State Conference
Freshman

2nd in WSC in 3m dive.
3rd in WSC in 1? dive.

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SWIMMERS

Sputter in state

■STATE:

BY JON LUSKIN
STAR REPORTER

The Valley College swim team was represented by Carl Amato and Shelly Stiles in the State Championship held in Solano College in San Francisco this past week.

Amato a freshman placed tenth in the three meter dive and 12th in the one meter dive. "It was a good experience," Amato said.

While Stiles, who specializes in the 50m

and 100m breast stroke, went up against stiff competition to place 17th in the state.

"I was disappointed with my time," Stiles said. "[I] did better last year." Stiles is a sophomore at Valley who has been on the team since her freshmen year. Strong winds brought up pollen to the swim meet. "Lots of pollen," coach Honjio said. "Shelly has allergies. Bill was also affected." When asked about the pollen, Stiles giggled, "I'm allergic to everything."

"All we can ask is to do the best time of the year," said diving coach Gary Honjio

of Amato's performance.

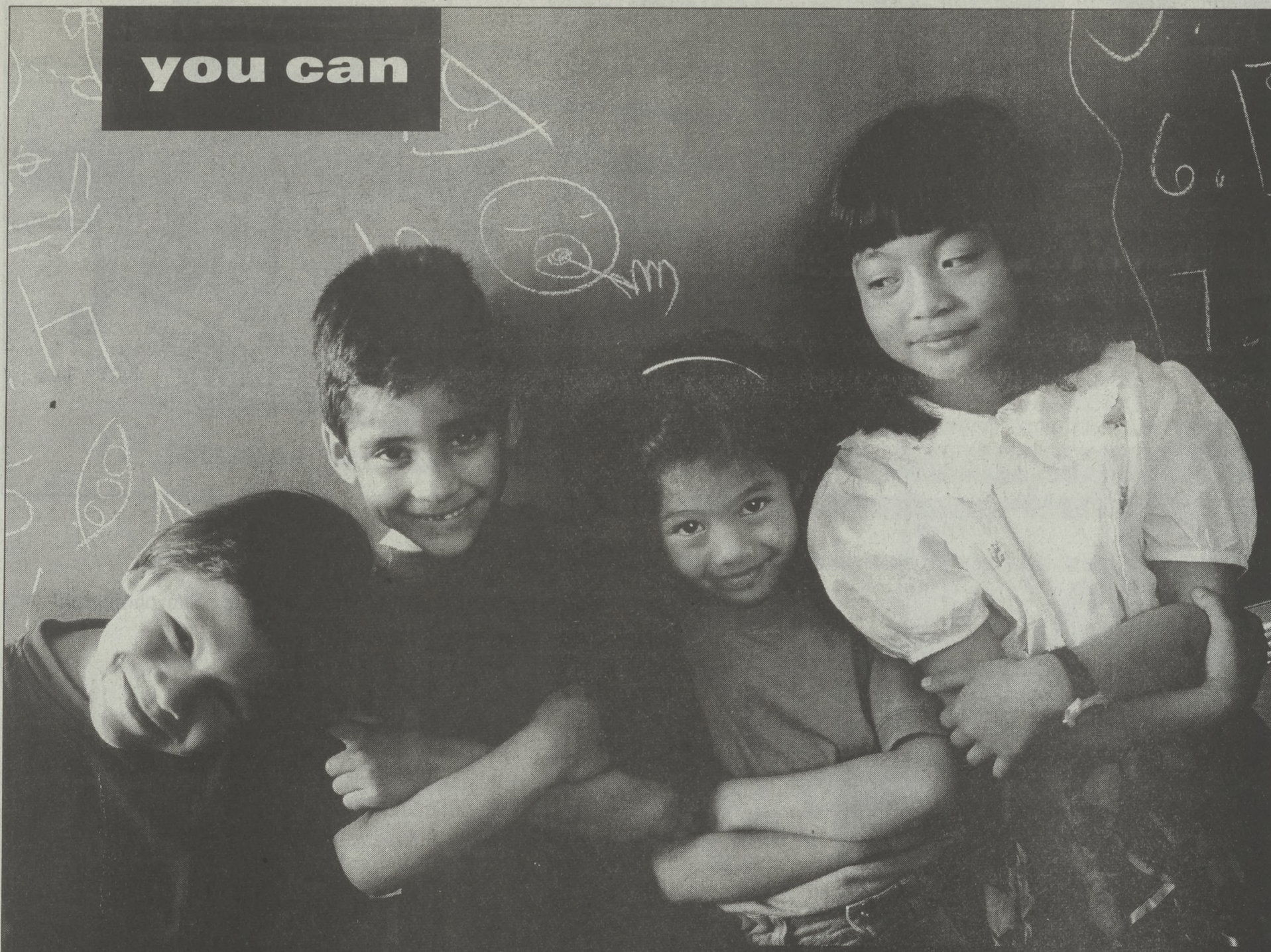
The diving competition consisted of 11 dives: two forward dive, two back dives, two inward dives, two reverse dives, two twisting dives, and one dive of choice. Amato chose the double-twisting one half to cap off his performance.

The State Championship comprised the top eight teams from Northern California against the top eight from Southern California. Of the 35 swimmers on Valley's swim team, only two, Amato and Stiles made it to the State Championships.

In preparation, the swim team practiced

two hours a day, five days a week since September. "The workouts were hard," Stiles said. "I felt good making it from my school."

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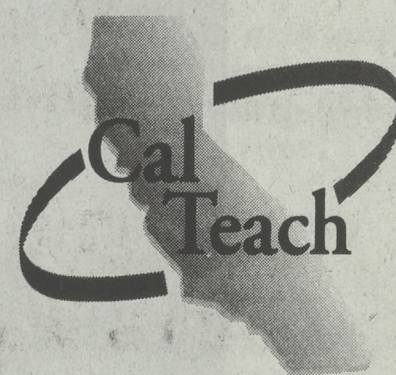
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